

# **Governor Jack Markell to Announce the Delaware Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness: May 4, 2015**

Where/When: American Legion Post 2, 835 South Bay Road, Dover, DE 19901 on Monday, May 4, 2015 @ 10:00.

*Governor Jack Markell to Announce the Delaware Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in 2015.*

At 10:00 AM on Monday, May 4<sup>th</sup>, at American Legion Post 2, Dover, DE, Governor Markell will gather state and local leaders together to announce the Delaware Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in 2015. This is one of the goals the Governor included in his State of the State Address on January 21, 2015.

The Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness is an initiative begun at the suggestion of First Lady Michelle Obama and Second Lady Jill Biden and organized under the auspices of the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH). USICH, in cooperation with the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA), developed the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in 2015, challenging mayors and community leaders throughout the nation to create new local initiatives to reach the goal of ending veteran homelessness in their communities. Since then, local initiatives have become active across the nation.

In October, 2015, Mayor Christiansen of Dover officially accepted the Mayors Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness and he formed a working group of local volunteers to begin working toward the goals of outreach to identify homeless veterans;

prevention of homelessness by promoting stable housing solution; and diverting veterans from temporary shelters to alternative housing arrangements and supportive services leading to permanent solutions. Mayor Christiansen asked the Vice Chairman of the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs to lead the efforts of the working group. In collaboration with HUD, VA, Delaware State Housing Authority, Dover City Planner, Dover Housing Authority, Kent County Levy Court and a host of other federal, state and local agencies as well as local private shelters, veteran service organization, businesses and interested individuals, the Dover Working Group brought together volunteers for a training program based upon strategies being successfully employed in various locations throughout the country. Through that effort the volunteers organized the Dover Veterans Welcome Home Team with the specific goals designed to end veteran homelessness in Dover in 2015. The team meets regularly to review the status of cases for veterans they are assisting.

From this initiative, the Delaware Commission of Veterans Affairs and the Delaware State Housing Authority in conjunction with the Delaware Joining Forces Coalition have developed the Delaware Challenge to End Veteran Homelessness in 2015 and to assist local communities throughout the state to create their own local goals and initiatives to end veteran homelessness.

On May 4<sup>th</sup>, Governor Markell will officially challenge state and local leaders to join the effort to end veteran homelessness in 2015.